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PAGE 01 STATE 059300

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 059300

NESCO

FOL REPEAT PARIS 5051 ACTION SECSTATE 19 FEB.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 05051

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNESCO, US

SUBJECT: HANDING UNESCO OVER ON A PLATTER TO THE
SOVIETS - AN ASSESSMENT

REF: (A) PARIS 4340, (B) PARIS 4357

SUMMARY: IT SEEMS QUITE CLEAR FROM THE OFFICES OF THE
US DELEGATION TO UNESCO THAT THE SOVIETS (AND ITS
SURROGATES FROM EE AND CUBA) ARE MAKING A QUIET, BUT
CONCERTED EFFORT TO WIN OVER UNESCO. THAT IS NOT TO
GAIN ACTUAL MANAGEMENT CONTROL, BUT RATHER TO WIN OVER
THE SYMPATHIES OF THE MEMBER STATES TO ITS LINE VIS-A-VIS
UNESCO AND TO WIN OVER THE UNCOMMITTED CIVIL SERVANTS
OF THE SECRETARIAT WHO ARE CHARGED WITH EXECUTING
UNESCO'S PROGRAMS. THE OBJECTIVE IS NOT NECESSARILY
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PAGE 02 STATE 059300

TO COMMUNIZE UNESCO'S PROGRAMS, ALTHOUGH STRONG

EFFORTS ARE MADE TO INFLUENCE PROGRAM CONTENT. RATHER AS WE SEE IT, IT IS PART OF AN OVERALL EFFORT TO WIN THE CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT OF THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY OF AFRICA. THEREFORE, WE WOULD URGE THAT UNESCO NOT BE VIEWED IN ISOLATION, BUT RATHER AS PART OF A TOTAL SOVIET EFFORT MAINLY DIRECTED AT AFRICA AND AFRICANS.

1. THE US PULLOUT FROM UNESCO WHICH IS INEVITABLY FOLLOWING THE CUTOFF OF CONGRESSIONAL FUNDS IS LEAVING IN ITS WAKE A MOOD OF ILL FEELING TOWARDS THE US AND LITTLE PROSPECT OF CORRECTING THE ANTI ISRAEL RESOLUTIONS WHICH WERE PASSED. LOSS OF THE US VOTE IN THE FORTHCOMING GENERAL CONFERENCE WILL EFFECTIVELY PRECLUDE ANY SERIOUS EFFORT TO ASSIST ISRAEL AND LEAVE THE FIELD FREE TO THOSE WHO WISH TO FURTHER POLITIZE THE ORGANIZATION. THE US OBSESSION WITH PUNISHMENT OF UNESCO FOR ITS ANTI ISRAEL ACTIONS HAS CREATED A VACUUM WHICH IS BEING FILLED BY THE SOVIETS. FURTHER, THE LONG STANDING US ATTITUDE OF IGNORING UNESCO AND USING ITS KEY EXECUTIVE BOARD POST AS A POLITICAL PLUMB GIVING THE RECIPIENT A FEW WEEKS IN PARIS REFTEL (A) HAS INEVITABLY CAST US IN THE ROLE OF A NATION THAT DOES NOT TAKE THE ORGANIZATION SERIOUSLY AND IS WILLING TO LET IT SLIDE AWAY.

2. THE ADVENT OF AMADOU M'BOW AS DIRECTOR GENERAL HAS PRESENTED THE SOVIETS WITH A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE ORGANIZATION AND COLLATERALLY IN AFRICA THROUGH CHAMPIONING UNESCO CAUSES. THE US WAS THE FIRST MAJOR POWER TO ENDORSE M'BOW AND THE SOVIETS ONLY RELUCTANTLY AND AT THE LAST MOMENT GOT ON HIS BAND WAGON. THEY, ALL ALONG, REGARDED M'BOW AS TOO MODERATE AND TOO PRO-WEST. HOWEVER, WITH THE ADOPTION OF WHAT IS CONSTRUED HERE AS THE US "PUNISH UNESCO" ATTITUDE THE SOVIETS HAVE NOW GOT M'BOW OVER A BARREL AND WHETHER HE WANTS TO OR NOT HE MUST RELY ON THEM AND THE ARABS TO KEEP THE ORGANIZATION AFLOAT. THE FACT THAT THERE IS NO OPEN PUBLICITY OR PROPAGANDA GIVEN THIS EFFORT DOES NOT MEAN

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PAGE 03 STATE 059300

THAT IT IS NOT EFFECTIVE AND THAT THE WORD IS NOT SPREADING AS TO WHO SUPPORTS THE AFRICAN DG AND WHO OPPOSES HIM. LARGELY FOR DOMESTIC REASONS THE US HAS NOT EXTENDED M'BOW THE COURTESY OF AN OFFICIAL INVITATION TO VISIT WASHINGTON. AS FREQUENTLY POINTED OUT BY THIS DELEGATION, HE HAS BEEN INVITED ON STATE VISITS TO ALMOST EVERY OTHER MAJOR COUNTRY, INCLUDING WESTERN EUROPE, I.E., WEST GERMANY, BELGIUM, ITALY, SPAIN AND

SCANDINAVIA TO NAME A FEW.

3. FAILURE TO SEE UNESCO IN THE CONTEXT OF A GENERAL SOVIET EFFORT DIRECTED AT WINNING THE SUPPORT AND SYMPATHY OF BLACK AFRICA IS PERHAPS OUR GREATEST ERROR. ALTHOUGH NOT LOOMING LARGE IN THE OVERALL SCHEME OF THINGS, UNESCO AND PARTICULARLY M'BOW DO PLAY- A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN AFRICAN THINKING AND PLANNING. THE JUST CONCLUDED MINISTERS OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE IN LAGOS AND THE OCTOBER MINISTERS OF CULTURE CONFERENCE HELD IN ACCRA ARE TWO RECENT EXAMPLES. AND IN OCTOBER THEREO IS THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN KENYA. THEREFORE, WITHIN A YEAR'S PERIOD THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT UNESCO CONFERENCES WILL HAVE BEEN HELD ON AFRICAN SOIL. THE AFRICAN STATES CANNOT HELP BUT NOTICE UNESCO AND BE ROOTING FOR THE SUCCESS OF M'BOW. THEY CANNOT BUT HELP RESENT FORCES WHICH SEEM TO BE UNDERMINING HIM.

4. WITHIN THE PAST SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR THE SOVIETS HAVE DRAMATICALLY INCREASED THE NUMBER OF CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS HELD AT UNESCO. A SEPTEL WILL FOLLOW GIVING A FULL ANALYSIS OF THESE VARIED EVENTS. THE OBJECT IS TO IMPLANT THE SEAL OF SOVIET INTEREST ON THE ORGANIZATION AND, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT, TO IMPLANT WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT THE VIEW OF THE SOVIET AS BEING POSITIVELY INTERESTED IN UNESCO. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE SOVIET CULTURAL OFFENSIVE HAS BEEN DIRECTED MAINLY AT INFLUENCING THE SECRETARIAT PERSONNEL.

5. WHERE WE GO FROM HERE DEPENDS ON WHAT EFFORTS THE US IS WILLING TO MAKE TO INDICATE THAT WE TAKE THE ORGANIZATION SERIOUSLY. SENDING ANOTHER INEXPERIENCED AND NEW MEMBER OF THE EXBD IS CERTAINLY NOT A WAY TO

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PAGE 04 STATE 059300

GET OFF TO A GOOD START. IT IS PREDICTABLE THAT SUCH A NEW MEMBER WILL SEE HIS MAIN ROLE AS MILITANTLY TRYING TO SOLVE THE UNESCO/ISRAELI PROBLEM BY OVERTURNING THE ANTI ISRAEL RESOLUTIONS. STIRRING UP THAT FIREPLACE, IS IN OUR VIEW, EXACTLY THE WRONG THING TO DO AND WILL PLAY INTO SOVIET HANDS BY FURTHER ISOLATION OF THE US. IN FACT, THERE SEEMS LITTLE THAT CAN BE DONE TO ASSUAGE OUR DOMESTIC CONSTITUENCY, AND AS OUR ASSESSMENT IS FOR MORE RATHER THAN LESS ANTI ISRAEL RESOLUTIONS, THE FUTURE INDEED LOOKS BLEAK FOR US INVOLVEMENT.

5. THE RESULT IS THAT UNESCO IS BEING SET UP BY THE SOVIETS AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE FOR THEM TO USE TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR CONCERN WITH AND SUPPORT FOR AFRICA. THERE GOAL IS NOT CONTROL PER SE OF THE ORGANIZATION'S

ACTIVITIES, BUT RATHER AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE UNESCO AS A SYMBOL OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR AFRICA AND THE THIRD WORLD IN GENERAL. M'BOW WILL NOT PERMIT HIMSELF TO BE DICTATED TO BY THE SOVIETS AND THEY NEED NOT DO SO TO ACHIEVE THEIR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE. THUS, IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF DIRECT SOVIET CONTROL, BUT RATHER OF UNESCO BEING FITTED INTO AN OVERALL STRATEGY OF PRESENTING THE SOVIETS AS THE CHAMPIONS OF AFRICA. AS TIME ELAPSES AND THE US PRESENCE DIMINISHES THE SECRETARIAT WILL BE FORCED TO LOOK TO THOSE WHO OFFER SUPPORT AND SYMPATHY TO THEIR EFFORTS AND HOSTILITY WILL BE RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO SEEM TO BE IN OPPOSITION.

6. IN CONCLUSION, THE SOVIET TACTIC AT UNESCO SEEMS TO BE TO QUIETLY WAIT FOR THE US TO BECOME ISOLATED FIRST FROM THE THIRD WORLD, PARTICULARLY THE AFRICAN MEMBER STATES, AND GRADUALLY FROM THE EEC NINE AND JAPAN AND THEN TO MOVE INTO THE VACUUM THAT IS LEFT. CUBA IS NOW A MEMBER OF THE EXBD AND IS ACTIVE BOTH WITH LATINS AND AFRICANS. OTHER SATELITTE MEMBER STATES, ARE OF COURSE, FOLLOWING THE SAME LINE. THEREFORE, WE WOULD URGE THAT UNESCO NOT BE VIEWED IN ISOLATION, BUT RATHER AS PART OF A CALCULATED SOVIET EFFORTS TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN AFRICA AND AMONG AFRICANS.
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PAGE 05 STATE 059300

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